



Canal Road - Scenic Byway

## 4

## THE COMPONENT PLANS

### Overview of the Plans

As specified in the federal scenic byway policy, a corridor management plan: "... should provide for the conservation and enhancement of the byway's intrinsic qualities as well as the promotion of tourism and economic development. The plan should provide an effective management strategy to balance these concerns while providing for the users' enjoyment of the byway."

This definition indicates that a Corridor Management Plan is actually a collection of plans. These plans include:

#### Intrinsic Qualities Maintenance and Enhancement Plan

This plan proposes recommendations for avoiding potential threats and detractors or mitigating existing threats and detractors to the intrinsic qualities and resources.

#### Visitor Experience Plan

This plan discusses efforts and proposals to minimize any intrusions on the visitor experience. It also identifies plans to enhance the experience, such as accommodating visitor services along the byway. The plan also discusses strategies to interpret the resources along the byway and educate travelers about them.

#### Tourism, Marketing and Promotion Plan

This plan describes how the Scenic Byway will be marketed and publicized to attract visitors, especially those from other countries. In addition, the plan discusses means to accommodate increased tourism.

#### Roadway Plan

The roadway plan discusses proposed modifications to the roadway alignment or design and proposed streetscape treatments

to the byway. The plan also discusses numerous strategies to increase alternative forms of transportation along the byway, such as public transportation, motor tours, bicycling, and walking.

#### Commerce and Facilities Plan

This plan proposes placement of highway signs that will support the visitor experience and help visitors find their way. This plan also demonstrates that existing laws on the control of outdoor advertising are being met

#### Component Plans of the Corridor Management Plan

- **Intrinsic Qualities Maintenance and Enhancement Plan**
- **Visitor Experience Plan**
- **Tourism, Marketing and Promotion Plan**
- **Roadway Plan**
- **Commerce and Facilities Plan**

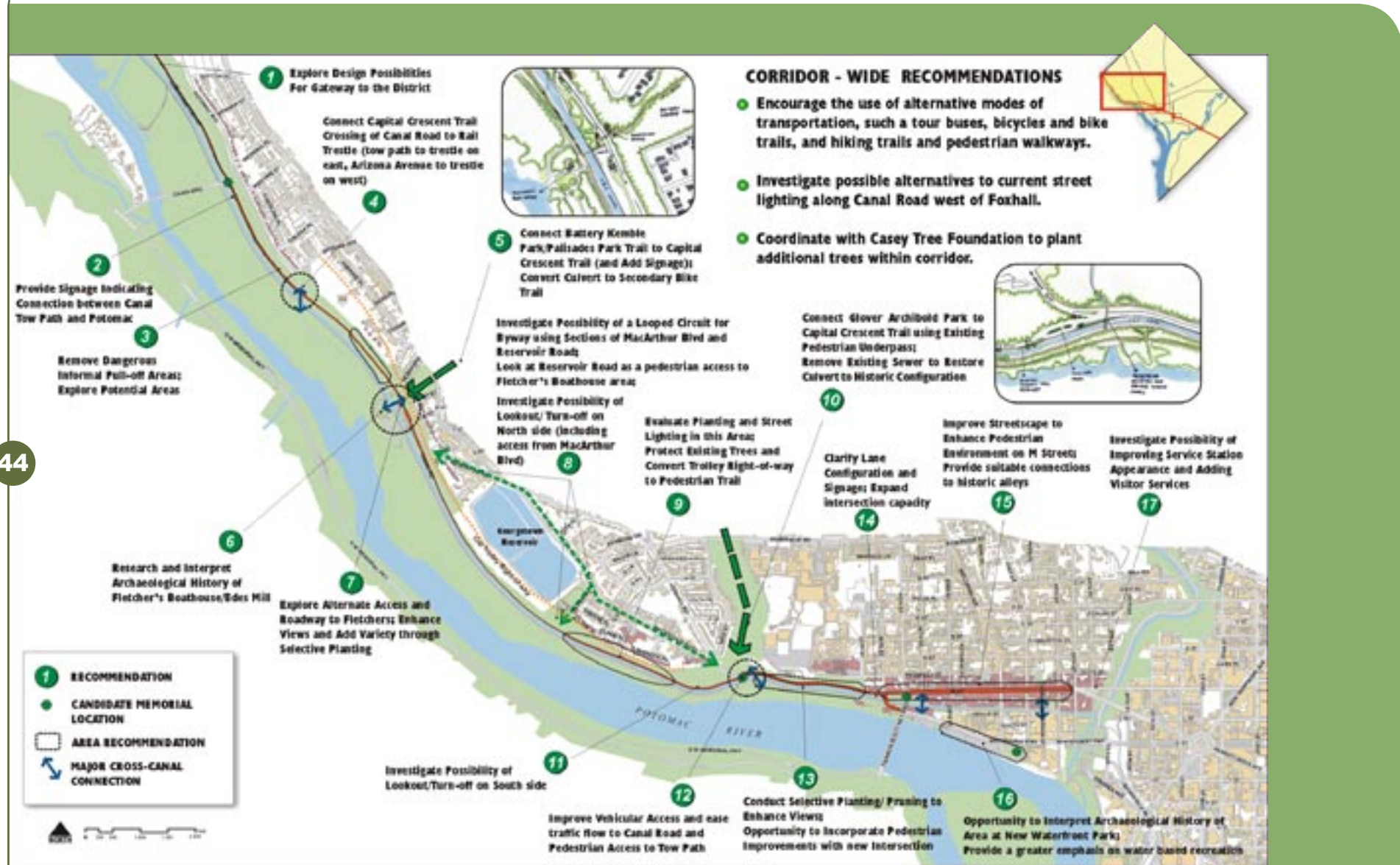


Fig. 4-1 **MAINTENANCE & ENHANCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 4 The Component Plans

### Intrinsic Qualities Maintenance & Enhancement Plan

One of the key objectives of this corridor management plan is to preserve, maintain, and enhance the scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, and natural intrinsic qualities of the Canal Road Scenic Byway corridor. This objective is critical to all byway planning. To a great extent, mechanisms are already in place to maintain and enhance the intrinsic qualities within the Canal Road corridor. Each of the agencies mentioned in Chapter 1 plays a role within its jurisdiction.

This section briefly addresses the intrinsic qualities described in Chapter 3 and provides examples of measures for maintenance and enhancement. These examples are presented in the form of recommendations; many of these recommendations are illustrated in the maps and other figures provided throughout the chapter.

#### Scenic Quality

Natural scenery, including the landscapes shaped by the geological development of the Potomac River, is a highlight of the Canal Road Scenic Byway experience. This type of scenic quality is dependent on the quality and abundance of natural resources; the aesthetic is heightened by proximity to the urban environment. In addition, the byway offers canal views, historic properties, and vibrant streetscapes. All are part of the diverse scenic resources of the Canal Road Scenic Byway.

Because the viewsheds of Canal Road Scenic Byway are so diverse, view-specific approaches are required on a case-by-case basis in the maintenance and enhancement of scenic resources. A full range of approaches should be considered, including consideration of both day and nighttime aesthetics. For example, vegetation management may involve either additional planting of new trees and shrubs or, to enhance scenic views or restore native species, removal of existing trees and shrubs. In consideration of nighttime viewsheds, the appropriate artificial lighting

within a largely natural area may be none; on the other hand, at canal crossings in Georgetown, subdued and indirect lighting may enhance the experience, as well as provide safety.

Scenic quality is closely related to recreation and visitor experience. Many recommendations in other sections of this plan (including those pertaining to recreation, natural resources, visitor experience, and roadway planning) also consider scenic amenities. To address certain scenic issues, this plan recommends the following measures:

- Coordinate with the Casey Tree Foundation and National Park Service to plant additional trees within the corridor and enhance the landscape maintenance program. Enhance views from Canal Road and add variety through plantings. Improve the scenic character of the road corridor by tree, shrub, and wildflower planting in areas where vegetation is sparse and views would not be obscured.
- Improve scenic views by selective cutting or trimming of vegetation where mid- or long-range views would be enhanced. Possible locations include the sections immediately west of Key Bridge and in the vicinity of Fletcher's Boat House access road.
- Conduct selective planting and/or pruning in area between Glover Archbold Park and 37th Street to enhance views.
- Investigate the possibility of a scenic view area on the north side of Canal Road, including areas with access from MacArthur Boulevard.
- Investigate possible, more visually pleasing alternatives to current street lighting along Canal Road, particularly in byway areas west of Foxhall Road.

#### Natural Quality

In addition to being a major component of scenic views, natural



Rail trestle incorporated into the Capital Crescent trail



Approaching the Abner Cloud House from Georgetown



Historic Car Barn structure on the corridor

resources also provide the setting for recreational activities, such as boating, fishing, and bird watching. Maintenance and enhancement of natural resources must also consider habitat values for wildlife. Through coordination with private foundations, environmental organizations, the National Park Service, and the District Department of Transportation, this plan recommends the following measures:

- Support protection of riparian areas and wetlands associated with the Potomac River.
- Use native vegetation in landscaping and other maintenance and enhancement projects.
- Promote the removal of invasive, non-native vegetation and replacement of such vegetation with native species.
- Support public agency and private organization efforts to improve surface water quality and reduce sources of pollution.

### Historic Quality

The Canal Road Scenic Byway is rich in historic resources - most notably, the central feature which ties the byway together from end to end, the C&O Canal. Much of the canal's history is well-documented; further opportunities exist to make this documentation come to life for visitors. Detractors and threats to historic resources can occur through neglect or loss of an historic property, or inappropriate development or renovation that physically damages or otherwise diminishes the historic integrity of a property, including changes to nearby structures and land uses that reflect adversely upon the setting of the historic property.

In conjunction with neighborhood organizations, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, the National Park Service, the DC Office of Planning, the District Department of Transportation, the DC Heritage Tourism Coalition, and the other interested parties, this plan recommends the following measures:

- Preserve and maintain historic properties throughout the corridor; conduct restoration and rehabilitation of historic properties in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Identify historic properties, including those reflecting Civil War history, that are under-interpreted or not interpreted, conduct research, and develop interpretive programs, including signage and written narratives for publication.
- Research and provide further interpretation of the history of the Fletcher's Boat House and Edes Mill area.
- Investigate the feasibility of restoring the ingenious inclined plane, which allowed canal boats to avoid waiting in line in Georgetown by being slipped down the bank to the retaining basin on the river's edge.

### Cultural Quality

Cultural qualities of the Canal Road Scenic Byway are expressions of Washington, DC customs and traditions. Georgetown is a major cultural center in the city, with entertainment, shopping, food, and clubs. Also within the corridor is the nationally acclaimed Georgetown University, which sponsors many educational and cultural events, as well as two embassies and the commercial, office, and residential complex of Washington Harbor on the Potomac River. To address certain cultural issues, this plan recommends the following measures:

- Support cultural heritage tours of historic venues in the vicinity of Canal Road and M Street; coordinate with the DC Heritage Tourism Coalition, and the Business Improvement District to link historic interpretation tours and share signage; and support Washington Convention and Tourism Corporation efforts to market and promote authentic experiences of historic Washington, DC.

## The Component Plans Intrinsic Qualities Maintenance & Enhancement Plan

### Archaeological Quality

Centuries of Euro-American occupation have largely obliterated much of the area's prehistory. However, the Canal Road Scenic Byway still holds considerable promise; within some less-disturbed areas, further discoveries could yield knowledge of Native American people. In conjunction with the National Park Service, this plan recommends:

- Develop and conduct a research and evaluation program for archaeological resources in areas of the byway that have experienced limited development, including the area around Fletcher's Boat House.
- Support research and interpretation of history and prehistory at the future Georgetown Waterfront Park.

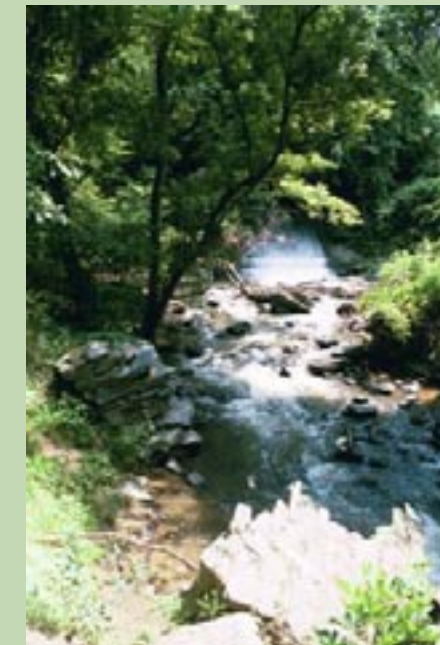
### Recreational Quality

The Canal Road Scenic Byway corridor offers significant recreational activities for an urban area. A simple walk along the canal tow path can combine exercise with nature-viewing and historical interpretation. More active forms of recreation within the byway include standard and mountain biking, fishing, canoeing, boating, roller-blading, and running. The potential is also very high for improvement and enhancement of these resources. In byway planning, recreation overlaps with scenic resources, visitor experience, the multi-modal strategy, and roadway planning. To address certain recreational resource issues, this plan recommends the following measures:

- Support and improve connections between existing multi-purpose trails. Improve connections between these trails and residential neighborhoods.
- Between Foxhall Road and the Georgetown Reservoir, support the conversion of the trolley right-of way to a multi-purpose trail.
- Connect the Capital Crescent Trail crossing of Canal Road



Tunnel near Glover Archbold Park facilitates pedestrian & bike access to the C&O Canal National Historic Park



Scenic & passive recreation amenities